



California Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans News

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NEWS FROM THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE



June 11, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF LOS ANGELES SOLDIER

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Staff Sgt. Greg P. Gagarin, of Los Angeles, CA:

"California has lost a brave man who risked his life to preserve our country's liberty and freedoms. Staff Sergeant Greg Gagarin served his country with determination and courage. Maria and I send our heartfelt condolences to Greg's family and friends."

Gagarin, 38, died June 3 as a result of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle in Thania, Iraq. Gagarin was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), United States Army, Fort Lewis, WA.

In honor of Staff Sgt. Gagarin, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



June 11, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF LA PUENTE SOLDIER

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Pfc. Justin A. Verdeja, of La Puente, CA:

"Today we mourn the loss of Private First Class Justin Verdeja. His leadership and inspiring dedication is honored and revered. Maria and I want Justin's family and friends to know that Californians are forever indebted to him for giving his life to the cause of liberty."

Verdeja, 20, died June 5 as a result of wounds suffered when his unit was attacked by insurgents using small arms fire in Baghdad, Iraq. Verdeja was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade

Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, United States Army, Fort Carson, CO.

In honor of Pfc. Verdeja, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



June 12, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF CHULA VISTA SOLDIER

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt. Charles E. Wyckoff Jr., of Chula Vista, CA:

"As a member of our armed forces, Sergeant Charles Wyckoff fulfilled a tremendous responsibility to our nation's citizens. His bravery is an example of the determination and courage that makes our nation strong. Maria and I send our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to Charles' family and friends."

Wyckoff, 28, died June 6 as a result of wounds suffered from enemy small arms fire in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Wyckoff was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, United States Army, Fort Bragg, N.C.

In honor of Sgt. Wyckoff, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



June 12, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF HAYWARD SOLDIER

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt. Andrew J. Higgins, of Hayward, CA:

"Sergeant Andrew Higgins has shown great dedication to his country. His bravery will forever remain an inspiration to all Californians. Maria and I send our thoughts and prayers to Andrew's family and friends at this difficult time."

Higgins, 28, died June 5 as a result of wounds suffered when his unit came in contact with enemy forces using small arms fire in Baqubah, Iraq. Higgins was assigned to the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), United States Army, Fort Lewis, WA.

In honor of Sgt. Higgins, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



June 13, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF CORONA SOLDIER

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Pfc. Cameron K. Payne of Corona, CA:

"Private First Class Cameron Payne will be remembered for the selfless sacrifice he made on behalf of his fellow Americans. Cameron's courage and profound allegiance to freedom and democracy will not be forgotten. Maria and I send our most sincere condolences to his family and friends."

Payne, 22, died June 11 in Balad, Iraq, as a result of wounds suffered from an improvised explosive device that detonated near his vehicle during combat operations in Baghdad, Iraq. Payne was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, United States Army, Fort Riley, KS.

In honor of Pfc. Payne, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



June 14, 2007

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON DEATH OF TWENTYNINE PALMS MARINE

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Lance Cpl. Johnny R. Strong of Waco, TX:

"Maria and I, along with all Californians, are saddened by the loss of Lance Corporal Johnny Strong. His dedication and loyalty to this great country will forever be remembered. Today we honor him for his courageous duty and send our most sincere thoughts and prayers to Johnny's family and friends in Texas."

Strong, 21, died June 12 as a result of wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Strong was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, United States Marine Corps, Twentynine Palms, CA.

In honor of Lance Cpl. Strong, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.

Note to editors: This News for Veterans and previous CDVA news for veterans, news releases, and advisories are available on our website at www.cdva.ca.gov and via e-mail from jaimeteaga@cdva.ca.gov.